

Top French court overrules Mercedes sales ban

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The rear of a Class A220 Mercedes Benz car is pictured at a car dealer in Rueil-Malmaison, outside Paris on August 22,2013. France's top administrative court has overruled a contentious government decision to ban the sale of some Mercedes models on the grounds that they posed a threat to the environment.

France's top administrative court Tuesday overruled a contentious government decision to ban the sale of some Mercedes models on the grounds that they posed a threat to the environment.

The Council of the State said registrations of certain A, B and CLA-class

models, frozen since June, should be resumed in two days.

"It does not appear that if these cars are put on the road in France...they will pose a serious threat to the environment," the ruling said, ordering the government to pay Mercedes France 3,000 euros (\$4,000) in damages.

France's environment ministry had initiated the move in June, saying the cars use an air conditioning refrigerant the European Union believes emits excessive [greenhouse gases](#).

Mercedes-Benz owner Daimler, which appealed against the ban, has insisted on sticking with an older coolant as it claims studies have shown that the new liquid catches fire more easily and puts cars at a greater risk of explosion in a crash.

Since January 1, European Union norms demand that [car makers](#) use a cleaner refrigerant, deemed less polluting than older products.

Daimler says it will persist with the older product with the hope that "in the next few years" a better version will be available.

The company says no country besides France has raised an objection to the continued use of the older [coolant](#).

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